

Message Text

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR XF

SUBJECT: RESUPPLY TO ISRAEL

REF: STATE 204562

1. GOS STATEMENTS ON ARAB-ISRAEL STRUGGLE REPORTED IN EMBTELS 5752 AND 5855 MAKE CLEAR SPANISH PRO-ARAB POSTURE AND DESIRE AVOID USE OF BASES IN SPAIN EVEN INDIRECTLY FOR US SUPPORT OF ISRAEL IN MIDEAST CONFLICT. THIS POSITION STRONGLY REAFFIRMED BY FOREIGN MINISTER IN MEETING WITH ME TODAY REPORTED SEPTEL. MOST SPANIARDS APPARENTLY DO NOT HAVE STRONG FEELINGS PRO OR CON ARAB OR ISRAEL CAUSE AND AMONG THOSE WHO DO EXPRESS PARTISAN SYMPATHY, THERE SEEMS TO BE NO OVERWHELMING SENTIMENT FOR ONE OR THE OTHER SIDE. THERE EXISTS, HOWEVER, AN EVIDENT CONSENSUS THAT IT IS POLITICALLY NECESSARY FOR THE GOS TO MAINTAIN A PRO-ARAB POSTURE AS WELL AS FOR THE POSITION THAT SPAIN SHOULD NOT PERMIT ITSELF TO BECOME INVOLVED IN MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST THROUGH ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US. THE LATTER VIEW IS REINFORCED BY THE WIDESPREAD FEELING THAT SPAIN IS INCURRING RISKS, OUT OF SECRET

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PROPORTION TO ITS GAINS, OF BEING DRAWN INTO BIG-POWER CONFLICTS AGAINST ITS WILL. MOREOVER, GOS IS UNDER STRONG ARAB PRESSURE TO PREVENT USE OF FACILITIES IN SPAIN AGAINST ARAB CAUSE. IT IS NOTEWORTHY, IN THIS CONNECTION, THAT

SPAIN IS ONLY COUNTRY WHERE US HAS MILITARY FACILITIES IN AREA WHICH DOES NOT HAVE RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL.

2. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, US USE OF FACILITIES IN SPAIN IN SUPPORT OF ISRAEL WOULD PROVOKE STRONG ADVERSE REACTION BOTH BY SPANISH GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC. IT WOULD BE LESS DIFFICULT, OF COURSE, TO RATIONALIZE EMERGENCY LANDING IN SPAIN THAN LOGISTICAL OPERATION OUT OF SPAIN. FORMER MIGHT BE JUSTIFIED AS UNPLANNED OCCURRENCE IN WHICH THERE WAS NO HUMANITARIAN ALTERNATIVE TO SAVING LIVES AND AS BEING IN ACCORD WITH RECOGNIZED INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE. PROCEDURAL ANNEX VII OF AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTING CHAPTER VIII OF AFC AUTHORIZES US FORCES TO USE ANY AIR BASE OR AIRPORT IN CASE OF AIRCRAFT EMERGENCY. WE COULD ADOPT LINE WITH MEDIA THAT EMERGENCY CONDITIONS FORCED AIRCRAFT TO DIVERT FROM ITS SCHEDULED ROUTE AND, IN ABSENCE ALTERNATE LANDING FACILITIES WITHIN RANGE, TO ENTER SPANISH AIR SPACE IN ORDER AVOID LOSS OF LIVES AND AIRCRAFT. THIS RATIONALE WOULD BECOME LESS PLAUSIBLE, HOWEVER, IF LANDINGS BECAME SO FREQUENT AS TO INDICATE DELIBERATE PLANNING FOR USE SPANISH FACILITIES FOR THIS PURPOSE.

3. IF, AS A LAST RECOURSE, USG FEELS IT OF VITAL IMPORTANCE TO SEEK GOS ACQUIESCENCE IN USE FACILITIES IN SPAIN TO SUPPORT OUR SUPPLY LINE TO ISRAEL, NOTWITHSTANDING FIRM STANCE TAKEN BY FONMIN WITH AMBASSADOR TODAY, WE MIGHT USE ARGUMENTS THAT (A) SOVIET ROLE IN SUPPORT ARAB FORCES HAS BECOME SO MASSIVE AS TO THREATEN OVERWHELMING OF ISRAEL; (B) OVERWHELMING ARAB VICTORY, AND WITH IT STRENGTHENING OF SOVIET INFLUENCE IN AREA, WOULD BE DISASTROUS FOR WEST, INCREASING THREAT TO EUROPE'S SOUTHERN FLANK AND ENDANGERING SPANISH SECURITY; (C) US PURPOSE IS TO MAINTAIN SUFFICIENT MILITARY BALANCE TO PERMIT DIPLOMATIC ACCOMMODATION IN AREA, SERVING ARAB AS WELL AS WESTERN VITAL INTERESTS. WE WOULD THEN HAVE TO COORDINATE CLOSELY WITH GOS IN DEVELOPING LINE WITH MEDIA THAT FACILITIES BEING USED BY US IN SPAIN IN ACCORD-
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DANCE WITH EXISTING AGREEMENTS AND FOR FURTHERING WESTERN SECURITY CONSISTENT WITH PURPOSES OF AGREEMENT. EVEN IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES I DO NOT FEEL SANGUINE ABOUT PROBABILITY OF CHANGE OF ATTITUDE BY GOS.

4. WE HAVE TO RECOGNIZE, MOREOVER, THAT ATTEMPTED USE OF FACILITIES IN SPAIN FOR SUPPORT ISRAEL, IN FACE OF FONMIN'S DEMARCHE TODAY, WOULD POSE A PROBLEM OF MAJOR PROPORTIONS FOR GOS, WHICH COULD PROVOKE AGONIZING REAPPRAISAL, BOTH ON THE SPANISH PART AND OURS, OF THE BASIS OF OUR DEFENSE COOPERATION.
RIVERO

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